



Trail News

July 21, 2016

From the

Meeteetse Conservation District

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Help Preserve Access to the Shoshone National Forest

(Meeteetse Conservation District) Please be aware that your ability to access Shoshone National Forest (SNF) Lands is slowly but surely being diminished on a continuing basis.

Did you know that through the recent Forest Planning process, areas of the forest in and around the Wood and Greybull River valleys have been precluded from multiple-use activities that were previously open to such uses?

Your federal forest lands are inconspicuously being taken from you, piece by piece, through the creation of "de facto" Wilderness - done by having layer upon layer of restrictions and regulation applied for traditional uses in the favor of arbitrarily defined and measured resource "concerns" for Grizzly Bears, Scenic Value, Serenity, Forest Health, etc.

While these are surely important components to be considered in local forest management, it appears to be the SNF's prerogative to limit human access in the forest to nothing more than foot and horse travel.

More than half of the 2.4 million acres of Shoshone National Forest are preserved as congressionally designated Wilderness and are already limited to this type of use. The constant barrage of restrictions is a threat to the uses upon which the economy, custom, culture and heritage of this community was built and exists today.

The SNF has eliminated any future opportunity for resource extraction, all but done away with the once booming commercial timber industry and is currently threatening your right to motorized recreation on the few, small tracts of land left that will support the usage.

Grazing restrictions could be imposed if proactive action is not taken in time.

It's not too late to voice your opinion and tell the Shoshone National Forest that enough is enough. The SNF is currently accepting written comments on the scoping phase of their Travel Management process. **The deadline for submitting your written comments is THIS WEDNESDAY, JULY 27th.** Now is the time to express your concerns before it's too late. Inform them that you support responsible motorized use of the forest. Speak against the seasonal closure expansion on Phelps Mountain road that they have proposed. Express strong support for additional motorized recreation opportunities in appropriate areas – opportunities that draw traffic to our local economy. The deadline is fast approaching so do not delay or your opportunity to be involved and informed during the rest of the process cannot be guaranteed. Please propose any additions to the forest travel system that you would like to see while there is still time.

Visit the following websites to obtain information on how to submit your comments and to view the proposals for road closures and trail additions:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2016/05/27/2016-12069/shoshone-national-forest-travel-management-shoshone-national-forest-wyoming>

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/shoshone/home/?cid=stelprd3846526>

The deadline for submitting your written comments is THIS WEDNESDAY, JULY 27th.

MEETEETSE TO CELEBRATE THE RETURN OF THE BLACK-FOOTED FERRETS ON JULY 26th

(Meeteetse Bulletin & Meeteetse Museum) The public is invited to Meeteetse, Wyoming, on **Wednesday, July 26th**, for a celebration of the historic reintroduction of the endangered black-footed ferrets! The celebration is jointly organized by Wyoming Game and Fish, US Fish and Wildlife, the Town of Meeteetse, Meeteetse Museums, the Meeteetse Visitors Center, and the Meeteetse School. Festivities will take place at various venues throughout Meeteetse. All activities are free to the public.



The celebration is in honor of the return of the black-footed ferrets to the Hogg (Lazy BV) and Pitchfork Ranches where they were found in 1981, after the species was believed to be extinct. On **July 26**, Wyoming Game and Fish will reintroduce 35 of the endangered ferrets to these ranches. The ferrets are provided by the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

- 1:30pm-3:00pm – Introductions and contest awards announces.
- 3:00pm-4:00pm – Ferrets arrive and are available for viewing
- 4:00pm-6:00pm – Invited guests witness the initial ferret releases
- 6:00pm-??? – Celebration moves to the downtown Meeteetse boardwalk

The Meeteetse Museum will host a live black-footed ferret all day and will provide refreshments during an “open house” in the afternoon and evening. The ferret is courtesy of US Fish and Wildlife. **If possible, a delayed video feed of the initial ferret releases will be played throughout the evening at the museum! The museum will remain open until 9 p.m.** to accommodate visiting media, wildlife officials, and general visitors. The Cowboy Bar/Outlaw Café and Elkhorn Bar & Grill will also keep their kitchens open later than normal to accommodate visitors. See you there!!!

USDA Reminds Producers of Aug. 1 Deadline to Enroll in Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Programs

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds farmers and ranchers that they have until Aug. 1 to enroll in Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and/or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for the 2016 crop year.

Producers have already elected ARC or PLC, but must enroll for the 2016 crop year by signing a contract before the Aug. 1 deadline to receive program benefits.

The programs trigger financial protections for participating agricultural producers when market forces cause substantial drops in crop prices or revenues. Nationwide, more than 1.76 million farmers and ranchers are expected to sign contracts to enroll in ARC or PLC.

Covered commodities under the programs include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium grain rice (which includes short grain and sweet rice), safflower seed, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat.

For more program information or to schedule an appointment, contact your local FSA office located in Powell, WY at 307-754-9411 and ask for Darla or Kathleen.

-----Reminders and Updates-----

July 26th ~ 1:30 p.m. – Return of the Black Footed Ferret celebration in Meeteetse. Everyone is invited.

July 27th ~ Welcoming the Ferrets Back To The Meeteetse Area Ranches

August 1st ~ Deadline to enroll in Agriculture Risk Coverage & Price Loss Coverage Programs

August 8th ~ 1:00 p.m. – MCD Regular Board Meeting, 1906 State Street, Meeteetse. The public is welcome.

Happy Trails to You! Bernie, Gary, Ginny, & Steffen